

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 460

By Byrd

A RESOLUTION to congratulate Dr. Suzanne Thomas of Hardin County on being named a West Tennessee Woman of Distinction.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should honor those exemplary individuals who have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to civic involvement within the political process; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Dr. Suzanne Thomas of Hardin County, who was honored at the first annual West Tennessee Women of Distinction Dinner, hosted by the Paris/Henry County Republican Women at the Vera Lowe Center for Student Enrichment on the campus of Bethel University on November 7, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Thomas was one of nine Republican women from across six West Tennessee counties honored for having distinguished themselves personally, professionally, and/or within the Republican Party as strong women who make a difference in their communities; and

WHEREAS, a champion in the fight against substance abuse, Dr. Suzanne Thomas was recognized for her lobbying efforts to enact laws and programs in Tennessee to help combat substance abuse with a special focus on chemically sick children, especially the establishment of specific education courses for methadone counselors; and

WHEREAS, a *cum laude* graduate of Lambuth University, Dr. Thomas earned her master's degree at Freed Hardeman University and holds a Doctorate of Education from the University of Sarasota. She is currently working toward certification as an alcohol and substance abuse counselor; and

WHEREAS, during her career, Dr. Suzanne Thomas has worked as a diagnostician and counselor at Quinco Mental Health in Savannah, supervising a team of healthcare providers,

and been a member of the Southwest Tennessee Health Care Board, focusing on chronically distressed young mothers recovering from Substance Abuse Disorder; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Thomas's exemplary record of service includes the establishment of the WIFE (Women Involved for Enrichment) program as part of her doctoral work. WIFE is a volunteer organization comprised of mothers and professional healthcare providers helping chronically distressed mothers to regain mental self-esteem and mental wellness, recover from drugs, and reenter society; and

WHEREAS, a volunteer at numerous drug recovery facilities and currently teaching a class at Teen Challenge, Dr. Thomas has also served as president of FLARE (Families, Laws, America, Responsible Education), bringing speakers to Savannah to address chronically distressed mothers in the Hardin County community; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Thomas is the president of Pickwick Republican Women, a 2015 Diamond Club award winner and chairman of the Tennessee Drug Awareness program presented by the Tennessee Federation of Republican Women; and

WHEREAS, a published author and television director and producer, Dr. Thomas is currently writing her second book, *Overcoming Grief in the Midst of Your Child's Addiction*, having previously released a novel, *Stumbling Stone*, and produced a local television program, *Family Focus*, that featured inspirational individuals; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Dr. Thomas was named the Outstanding Young Woman of Hardin County in 1980 and has received a number of honors in recognition of her work with both FLARE and WIFE; and

WHEREAS, a devoted wife and mother, Dr. Thomas enjoys the love and support of her husband, Dr. Jim Thomas, a physician, and their two sons, James Martin and Christopher Todd Thomas; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Suzanne Thomas epitomizes the ideal of the consummate professional, dedicated public servant, and reliable friend and neighbor; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Thomas is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the Volunteer State, and she should be specially recognized on this special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we congratulate Dr. Suzanne Thomas on her recognition as a West Tennessee Woman of Distinction and extend to her our best wishes for much continued success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.